

Message Text

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42

ACTION EA-14

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NSC-07 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 PA-04

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2919

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INFO CINCPAC

DIA

UNCLAS BANGKOK 7163

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, TH

SUBJ: THE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN ON JUSMAG RELOCATIONS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. PRACHA KHUNAKASEM, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INFORMATION DEPARTMENT FOR THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA), HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 2. FOLLOWING ARE HIS COMMENTS ON PLANS FOR JUSMAG AND USARSUPTHAI. BEGIN QUOTE

REPORTER: HAS THE UNITED STATES INFORMED US OF THE PLAN TO TRANSFER SOME JUSMAG UNITS TO UTAPAO?

PRACHA: THE UNITED STATES AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN CONTACTED AND QUESTIONED ALREADY AND THEY EXPLAINED THAT IN THE ANNOUNCEMENT ISSUED ON APRIL 22 ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES IT WAS STATED THAT THERE WOULD BE A REDUCTION OF PERSONNEL. THEREFORE A UNIT WILL BE LIQUIDATED WHICH THEY CALL USARSUPTHAI--U.S. ARMY SUPPORT AHI OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT BUT I CANNOT REMEMBER. THIS UNIT IS STATIONED IN TAMBON SAMAESARN, SATTAHIP, AND AFTER IT HAS BEEN LIQUIDATED SOME OFFICIALS FROM JUSMAG IN BANGKOK WILL BE

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SENT TO REPLACE THEM. THEY EXPLAINED THAT NOT ALL JUSMAG

UNITS WILL BE SENT AND STATIONED IN SAMAESARN, SATTAHIP, THAT ONLY SOME JUSMAG OFFICIALS WILL BE SENT TO REPLACE AND PERFORM DUTIES OF THE ORIGINAL USARSUPTHAI UNIT. THIS IS THE INFORMATION WE HAVE RECEIVED IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS WE MADE.

REPORTER: WHEN WILL THEY BE TRANSFERED?

RACHA: MOST PROBABLY VERY SOON, BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN DECIDED ALREADY TO WITHDRAW THIS USARSUPTHAI. THE UNIT WILL BE LIQUIDATED AND WITHDRAWAL WILL BE CARRIED OUT BY GRADUAL STAGES. DURING THAT TIME JUSMAG OFFICIALS WILL BE SENT AS SUPPORT.

REPORTER: I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS UNIT THAT WILL BE WITHDRAWN WILL RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES. AM I CORRECT?

PRACHA: THAT IS WHAT I UNDERSTAND, BUT WHETHER IT RETURNS TO AMERICA OR IS SENT TO PERFORM WORK ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIR OF THE UNITED STATES.

REPORTER: IS THIS USARSUPTHAI A TRANSPORTATION UNIT?

PRACHA: I DON'T KNOW. BUT THIS USARSUPTHAI WILL BE LIQUIDATED. IT MIGHT PERFORM OTHER DUTIES, SUCH AS TELECOMMUNICATIONS OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. IF YOU WANT DETAILS YOU HAD BETTER GO AND ASK MACTHAI OR THE AMERICAN EMBASSY. I AM NOT AN AGENT OF THOSE TWO WORK UNITS. WHEN YOU COME AND PUT QUESTIONS TO ME I CAN GIVE YOU FACTS CONCERNING MAJOR PRINCIPLES BUT NOT DETAILS, BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT WORK UNITS OF OUR GOVERNMENT.

REPORTER: ARE NEGOTIATIONS FOR WITHDRAWALS OF FORCES HELD REGULARLY?

PRACHA: THEY ARE HELD ALL THE TIME. PLEASE PUT THIS QUESTION TO GENERAL KRIANGSAK CHOMANAN BECAUSE HE IS THE PERSON WHO MAKES CONTACTS FOR MEETINGS THROUGHOUT. MEETINGS ARE HELD REGULARLY. WE HAVE REACHED AGREEMENT FOR THE REDUCTION OF ABOUT 10,000 MILITARY MANPOWER SPACES AND SOME STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL AIRCRAFT, BUT MEETINGS

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HAVE TO BE HELD CONTINUALLY IN REGARD TO WHERE THEY WILL BE WITHDRAWN FROM AND IN WHAT NUMBER, AND WHAT TYPE OF AIRCRAFT AND IN WHAT NUMBER WILL BE WITHDRAWN. THESE MEETINGS AND CONSULTATIONS WILL CONTINUE BEING HELD UNTIL THE REDUCTION OF AMERICAN MILITARY FORCE LEVELS IS CARRIED OUT IN FULL AS AGREED BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR. MEETINGS AT OFFICIAL LEVEL ARE IMPLEMENTING MAJOR POLICY UNDER THE AGREEMENT

REACHED. A START IS BEING MADE THIS WAY AND USARSUPTHAI IS PART OF THE WITHDRAWALS CARRIED OUT BY GRADUAL STAGES AND OF THE GRADUAL AND STEADY REDUCTION OF STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL AIRCRAFT.

REPORTER: COULD YOU GIVE US FIGURES OF REDUCTIONS?

PRACHA: I HAVE SEEN THE FIGURES BUT I CANNOT REMEMBER THEM. WHOULD I GIVE YOU FIGURES THEY MIGHT BE WRONG, THEREFORE I WILL REQUEST KHUN PIRATH TO CHECK UP ON THEM AND GIVEN YOU THE INFORMATION. EH* WE HAVE ANNOUNCED FIGURES IN THE NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION. IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR YOU TO GO AND CHECK THROUGH NEWS BULLETINS IN THE DEPARTMENT. I REMEMBER DEFINITELY THAT FIGURES WERE GIVEN IN A NEWS REPORT ISSUED IN APRIL, LAST MONTH. END QUOTE

2. COMMENT: NATURALLY PRACHA'S PRESS CONFERENCE LED TO A FLOOD OF QUERIES TO THE MISSION BY THE AMERICAN AND FOREIGN PRESS WE HAVE SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT BY RESPONDING THAT THE MFA VERSION WAS MISLEADING, AND THAT ALTHOUGH PROPOSALS HAD BEEN MADE FOR REORGANIZATION AND CUTS OF JUSMAG AND USARSUPTHAT, NO DECISIONS HAD BEEN REACHED AS TO THE FORMS THESE WOULD FINALLY TAKE, WE HAVE SAID THAT CUTS IN MACTHAI COULD BE IN THE RANGE OF 30 PERCENT.

3. MACTHAI AND EMBASSY HAVE CALLED TO ATTENTION OF GENERAL KRIANGSAK AND MFA MISLEADING ELEMENTS IN PRACHA'S COMMENTS TO PRESS. MASTERS

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